NOAH'S DOVE, OR, AN EPISTLE OF PEACE,

DIRECTED

To his intirely affected Brethren, The *Presbiterians*, and *Independants*.

As a probable means, for their Agreement and Vnion.

From Sir IAMES HARINGTON, *Knight*.

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Noahs Dove, or an Epistle of Peace, directed to his intirely affected Brethren, the Presbiterians, and Independants: As a probable means, for their agreement and union.

Sincerely Beloved,

Read of two Children contending in the wombe of their Mother, the one beloved, the other hated, but ye are both *Jacobs*, both the Israel of God. O farre be it from such Brethren to rend and lacerate their Mothers bowels, or to *fall out in the way. Are we not one Body, and have we not all one spirit, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all; I beseech you by the mercies of God*, by the excellent effects of Charity, by the Fruits of the spirit, by the examples and command of the Lord Jesus, and the character of his Disciples, *bee meeke and lowly, and love one another*; so shall the plots of *Rome* and Hell be prevented, and all Malignants shut their mouthes. *why should it be spoken to our shame,*

Gen. 25. 22. *Malach.* 1. 3. *Gen.* 45. 24. *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6. *Rom.* 12. 1. 1 *Cor.* 13. 4. *Galat.* 5. 22. *Math.* 11. 29. *John* 13. 34, & 35. 1 *Cor.* 6. 5,

6. *ſhame, that there is not a wiſe man amongſt us? No, not one that is able to judge between his Brethren*: but Brother aſperces and declaimes *againſt Brother*, and *that before* the Antichriſtians. *Now therefore there is utterly a fault amongſt you, know yee not that Revilers ſhall not inherit the kingdome of God?* But ſome will anſwer, that they have received a new light, O be cautious that novelty eclipſe not truth, ſince the laſt dayes foretold and fore-warnd of by our Saviour, are at hand, wherein *iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold, hence, Father againſt ſonne, and ſonne againſt Father, betraying one another, and hating one another; Hence the judgements of Famine and Peſtilence; Nation riſing up againſt Nation.* So that the whole world ſeemes to be on fire before its time; Theſe dayes not I, but the Lord Jeſus, the great Prophet of his Church, dictates and points out to be the time, when *many falſe Chriſts, and Prophets* (or teachers of Chriſtianity) *ſhall ariſe*; who by their applauſe, excellencie of parts, and externall holineſſe, by which they ſhall ſhew forth, as it were, *ſignes and wonders*, and gather a multitude of Diſciples, declaring that in ſuch a meeting, be it *in woods, or deſerts, or in ſecret chambers*, the true way of Chriſt is to be found, *deceiving if it were poſſible, the very elect.* Our Lord teaching us from hence, how neere a ſimilitude, theſe new Doctrines ſhall have to truth, and true holineſſe. But be they as *Paul*, or *Cephas* in the Church, or as *Angels from heaven*, believe them not; *for as the lightning comes out of the Eaſt, and ſhines even to the Weſt, ſo ſhall alſo the glorious comming of the Son of man be*; that is, (as I humbly conceive) that his Goſpell which at firſt broke

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Matth. 24. 12.

Verſ. 7. 10.

Verſ. 11. *and* 24.

Verſ. 26. *and* 24.

Verſ. 27. *Gal.* 1. 8. 2 *Cor.* 11. 13.

broke out like lightning in the East, shall in this last age, upon the ruins, and through the clouds of spirituall Babilon, dart it selfe, and shine gloriously in our Westerne Churches even to the Indies; that th'other paralell prophesie may be fulfill'd, by the subjecting, and uniting the Kingdomes of the Earth, unto the *Kingdome of the Lord, and of his Christ.* *Rev.* 11.15.

Let us not then be carried about with every wind of *Eph.*4.14. *Doctrine*, but hold fast the Gospell delivered to us by Christ, and his Apostles, *in the unity of the spirit*, and *Eph.*4.3. *the bond of peace, since other foundation can no man lay,* 1 *Cor.*3.11. it being a sinne, so much as to doubt, much more to *Rom.*14.23. defend, that the fundamentalls of our Religion, some of which are mentioned by the Author to the * He- * *Heb.*6.1. brews, and received by the Church in all ages, are not to bind, as *de futuro*, as having a possibilitie upon 2. new notions, to be nuld or chang'd, which is to make God a lyer, to undermine his Church, and to pull downe the Pillers thereof; *For if the foundations bee* *Psal.*11.3. *destroyed, what shall?* * Nay, *what can the righteous doe?* Wherefore my humble suit unto our master Builders is, to keepe the Foundation unmoveable, not permitting a resurrection to ancient heretiques before their time, that so *whatsoever men build thereon, whe-* 1 *Cor.* 3.12. *ther it be gold or stubble*, may be brought to the Test, in this Fiery triall.

Stand fast therefore Brethren in that libertie, wherein *Gal.*5.1. *Christ hath made us free*, not making your libertie a & 13. cloake for malitiousnesse, *not for an occasion to the Flesh, but by love serve one another, judging thus of one another that he that loves his Brother, abides in the light, but* * *he that hates his Brother* (whatsoevet he may boast * 1 *Joh.*2.9.

of new discoveries,) *walkes in darkenesse, and knowes not whither he goes*, because *that darkenesse hath blinded his eyes*, and that *whosoever seemes to be religious, and yet bridles not his tongue, he deceives his owne heart, and his Religion is vain.* *

* *Jam.* 1.16.

But that I may not only perswade, but offer my Mite, I shall in all humilitie propose a medium, which if found agreeable to the word of God, may through the blessing of the Almighty make up the Breach, and reconcile your greatest difference.

1 *Cor.*14.34. 1 *Tim.*2.11. 1 *Cor.*5.11. 2 *Cor.*6.14. 17. I conceive you both agree in these particulars. That all that shall be Members, and have right to Vote in your Churches, (from which Votes Women are excepted) shall not only be free from just scandall, that is Prophanesse, and the impenitent practise of any knowne sinne, but be indued with a sufficiencie of knowledge, to which end (since you accord in the Principles of Religion) I hope there will speedily be set forth, and establisht one short Catechisme for information, and examination. Next in condiscention to the Independants, I heare it is mutually resolved, that the government of their respective Members, reconciling of Inferiour differences, and ordering their conversations, even as farre as Ordination, and the censure of Excommunication, (respect being had in Appeals to the advice and results of the Classes and Provinciall Synods, and saving to the Presbyterians their right) be ordered by their paricular Congregations.

*Ephes.*2.21. Thus farre we are knit together in one spirituall building and temple of God. The great difference if I understand it, is in the Tegument and covering, which

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is indeed, the ornament, coupling, and ſtrength of the whole Ædifice: As where ſhall reſt (as to us) under the ſame Scepter, the determinative and concluding power, the end of Appeals, the regulation of that unlimited Plea, and over-much extended libertie of conſcience, that ſo we may be one, as Chriſt and his Father are one; this, ſome of you fixe in a generall Aſſemblie, others, limit to a particular Congregation; The firſt pleads not only Scripture analogically, but prudence for preſerving union, and preventing of Tumults, as alſo Antiquitie, from the paralell in generall Counſells and Parliaments, affirming that the other way, hath no grounds in Scripture: ſince Churches were neceſſarily Independant, no State being then Chriſtian that this way (by reaſon that our corrupt nature hath no check) is deſtructive to the unitie of Religion. Since according to the number of the Congregations will be their opinions, as alſo pernitious to Common-wealths; their being no *feuds* ſo bloody and irreconciliable, as thoſe that breake out about points of Faith, inſtance, in the wars betweene the Turke and Perſian, Papiſts and Proteſtants, in the Lutheran conteſtations, and Arian perſecutions. Laſtly, they conclude an inconſiſtencie in this way, with relations and callings, diſaffection and departure from Bed, Board, Families, and Imployments, being experimentall conſequences of Religious differences. *Joh.17.21.*

On the other ſide, the contradicting partie affirme, that a generall Aſſembly differs but in name from a Conclave of Cardinals, or Prelaticall Synod, that every member of the Church is free, and ought not in matters of Faith, to conclude himſelfe by Proxie, that

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no Church hath power over another, or Brethren (ſince the Apoſtles,) have Dominion over the Conſciences of their Brethren, that their Platforme of Church Governmrnt ought to be, and is *jure divino*, that the Eavngelicall Scripture ſets foorth theirs, and no other.

Now deare Brethren, give me your pardon and leave with *Moſes*, to ſtep in betwixt your Combatings, with his and *Abrahams* words, *why doe ye contend being ye are Brethren*, it may be God giving a bleſſing, and each of you in his hand, I ſhall in my Propoſition be a medium to unite you, (only diſpiſe not my indeavours,) ſince *the Lord hides many things from the wiſe and prudent, and reveales them to Babes.*

Exod. 2.13. *Gen.* 13.8. *Mat.* 11.25.

But to proceed, I obſerve neither of you arrogate to your ſelves an infallability but piouſly ſeeke, an Orthodox and Prudentiall way of Government, for the attaining and preſerving, Gods truth; bleſſed are your indeavours, yea they ſhalbe bleſſed. Wherefore I aske the Presbiterians why doe ye extoll and lift up a generall aſſemblie, above the reſt of the flocke of Chriſt: To the Independants I ſay why doe ye preferre the judgement of one particular Congregation, before the ioynt votes of all the refined Chriſtian Churches of the Kingdome, ſurely the firſt will yeild to me, that where moſt of Gods People are in their judgement, there is the greateſt meaſure of his ſpirit, and to ſuch Aſſemblies principally, and to their votes, are made all thoſe gratious promiſes (I needе not coare the places) concerning Chriſts ſpirit and preſence I mean to ſuch a Multitude not of Men only, but of purged and viſible believers.

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The other I preſume both from grounds of Scripture and reaſon, will grant, that could the votes of all the reputed and received Members of Chriſt, of their ſeverall Churches, be joyntly taken and in one place, they muſt be accepted, and are but as the vote of one great Congregation, which though it have an increaſe of Miniſters and Elders, yet according to a true difinition for eſſence is a Church, and that more eminently, though not more truely then the particular Congregations of whom it conſiſts, even as an Aſſembly made up of many Families, called by the * Apoſtle Churches of God, is more excellent, then its ſubdiviſions. *Coloſ:*4.15. *Rom.*16.5.

But that I may make good by Scripture, this incorporating of Churches, conjuncture and union of votes, I ſhall remember you of thoſe three chiefe prooſes, and lights of Church Government, both for Doctrine and manners. The firſt ſhewes the Primitive and Apoſtolique way, of ending controverſies in Doctrine, by the ſummoning of that great Aſſembly, of the members of the Churches of *Ieruſalem* and *Iudea* of which Churches, read. *Acts.*11.1.and *Galat:*1.22. Therefore called a Multitude. *Acts.*15.12. in which the Apoſtles, (although indued with an infallible ſpirit,) and the Elders of the Churches did not alone vote, and decree matters (though that in many caſes, wherein the People conſents, ſuch votes, may be and are neceſſary expedient & lawfull) but the whole Church. *verſe* 22. which compar'd with. *Acts.*2. *verſe* 41. Wherein three thouſand are ſaid to be converted, and with *Acts.*4. *verſe* 4. Wherein five thouſand, were by one Sermon converted, clearely demonſtrates,

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that this Assembly was composed of many Congregations, as further appeares from the Apostles teaching and preaching in every house. *Acts*.5.42. How else could eight thousand Men, besides Women and Children, be taught and edified.

The like is proved, from the election and choise of the seaven Deacons by the vote of the Multitude. *Acts*.6.5. Where the Apostles, and Elders also were present, yea those whom the holy Ghost. *Acts*.2.47. Calls a Church in a Nationall respect, he calls Churches. *Acts*.9.31. In a Congregationall consideration, And lastly in *Corinth* there more then probably appears to be many * Congregations, else whence or where, were these discentions, and divisions some saying, *I am of* Paul: *others I am of* Apollo, *of* Cephas, 1.*Cor*.1.12. All the Members of which were commanded to meete in one Assembly for the excommunication of the incestuous person 1.*Cor*.5.4. Where note they were to meete, to whom the Epistle was directed, & who are admonished to mourn: But the Epistle and exhortation was directed to the whole Church of *Corinth*, and not to the Elders only. *ergo* the whole Congregation, when they shall desire it, have a right to vote, and censure.

* Compare *Rom*.16.16. with the postscript of that Epistle.

Having thus fully proved by Scripture, that in Cities and Provinces, and consequently in Kingdoms, the Members of particular Congregations may and were by command to meete for the deciding of any great difference, yea the Apostles though of an infallible spirit, did not contradict, but give both approbation and institution to that liberty. I shall with humblest submission, offer this following Proposition, as a right

Acts 2.15. 23. *Act*.21.22.

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and fit *medium* of reconciliation. That in all great ſciſms and hereſies, over ſpreading whole Churches, if the breach cannot be made up by advice, argument, and ſubordinate diſcipline either Congregationall or Presbiteriall; an appeale be made to a Generall Aſſembly, who after the ſtating, diſputing and voting, ſuch points in difference together with the merrit of the offence (the recuſant Church or Churches, notwithſtanding continuing unſatisfied) that then the Aſſembly adjourne that ſeſſions for three moneths, in which time, the Aſsembly, members of each Congregation, to be ordered after faſting and prayer, to ſtate the Queſtion and declare the Arguments and Judgement of the generall Aſſembly to their particular Churches, and ſo accordingly at that meeting receive, and bring up each Churches vote and ſentence with the number (becauſe of the diſproportion of Pariſhes) ſum'd up of thoſe that affirme, and thoſe that diſcent, that ſo at the next Seſſion the Queſtion may be decided and concluded, by the Major vote, both of Churches and Members which Scripture way will not only by a religious Policy from time to time diſcover the temper, pulſe, & inclination of the whole Kingdome, and conſequently adminiſter a great help and direction to Government, but will give full ſatisfaction to all, (unleſſe to obſtinate heritickes) as being the judgement and vote (even by the Poale) of all the viſible and individuall Chriſtians of the Kingdome politically united, as in one Congregation, yea the diſobedient wilbe left without excuſe, and juſtly liable to their ſentence of excommunication.

But put the Queſtion a conſiderable number of the

Churches in the Kingdome, give in their vote with a new opinion, hazarding a rent and diviſion in the Nation.

I anſwer, that upon ſo ſad an occaſion our Church (in imitation of the ancient callings of Generall Counſels, upon the over flowing of hereſie,) ought to deſire the judgement and aſſiſtance, and that by additionall votes (if it may be) of all the reformed Churches in the world, which comes neereſt to the judgement of the holy Catholicke Church, the body of Chriſt, to which he hath promiſed his preſence, *Math.* 28.20 and ſpirit of truth to the end, and therefore muſt as to each particular State or Church, though not infallibly, yet prudentially, end and conclude by obedience either active or paſſive the diſcenting Churches, whom the civill Magiſtrate after the Churches excommunication, is to order by baniſhment or leſſer puniſhment, according as their doctrines, ſhalbe *2. Chro.* 15. more or leſſe prejudiciall to the State, wherein they *verſe* 12.13. live. Which ſince they ſuffer as evill doers, is (as to 14. that Common-wealth) a civill and neceſſary act of preſervative Juſtice, not an inforcing of Conſcience *Matthew.* 18 or perſecution. *verſe.* 17.

Thus fervently beſeeching the bleſſing of the all-wiſe God, upon my poore and weake indeavours, truſting that in the bowells of love, and charity, I have in ſincerity and plainneſſe declared unto you the mind of Chriſt, in all humility I conclude.

Imprimatur Joſeph Carill.

The unworthieſt of the ſervants of the Lord Jeſus.

J.H.

FINIS.

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